

# BIG SANDY NEWS.

Aut inveniam viam, aut faciam.

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER 30

LOUISA, LAWRENCE COUNTY, KENTUCKY, MARCH 26, 1909.

M. F. CONLEY, Publisher

## BIG RANSOM

### Paid Kidnapers for Return of Boy.

### Stolen Child is Nephew of Capitalist Owning Big Sandy Lands.

Willie Whittle, the young son of a wealthy citizen of Sharon, Pa., was kidnaped on Thursday of last week while on his way home from school. An immense reward was immediately offered for the return of the lad and the police and detective force of all the large eastern cities were put on the case. The distracted father, while almost crazed with grief at the possible fate of his child, did not for a moment lose sight of the fact that the lad had been stolen for ransom. He was soon met with a proposition to place ten thousand dollars where it could be found, and then he would get the boy. The father at once dismissed the police and prepared to meet the demands of the kidnapers. Whittle was to leave ten thousand dollars in small bills at a certain point in a park at Ashtabula, O. If he did this and made no attempt to trap the men engaged in the outrage his boy would be sent to a hotel unharmed. Whittle complied with the demands in every particular, but the boy was not delivered and the money was left untouched. Another letter told Whittle to call upon a woman in a candy store in the suburbs of Cleveland. He did so and paid her the money under agreement that the boy would be delivered 6 hours later at a certain hotel. The boy was placed on a street car at 8 p. m. with a note to the conductor to "Send this boy to the Hollenden Hotel on the double quick." It was done, and very soon, after 125 hours of distracting agonizing suspense the father clasped his boy in his arms. There was evidently no intention on the part of the kidnapers to harm the boy. He was well treated and cared for during the time he was held for the big ransom. The villains got the money but it seems that their ill gotten gains will not do them any good.

Two men and a woman were arrested Tuesday night at Cleveland in connection with the Whittle kidnaping case. When the police searched the satchel the men carried they found \$5,545.50 in currency. Inspector Rowe professes to believe that he has captured the kidnapers of Willie Whittle.

The man and woman declined to explain the possession of such a large sum of money or where they came from, or their destination.

At the police station the woman appeared to be the spokesman of the party and said:

"You have got the goods on us and there will be hell in Sharon tomorrow."

The officers were attracted by the movement of the trio and approached them with a view to learning their identity.

"Whither are you bound in such haste?" inquired the police captain.

The man carrying the satchel dropped his precious burden and started to run. The remaining man and woman stood their ground.

A detective took up the chase for the fleeing man and captured him only after two shots had been fired, while the other officer stood guard over the others.

This interesting story has a tinge of local interest in that an uncle of the abducted boy, Frank H. Buhl, a millionaire steel magnate of Sharon, is largely interested in the big corporation known as the No. 10 Coal and Coke Company. He was one of the first of the big capitalists who became interested with John C. Mayo in the vast domain of hidden wealth now owned by this company in the Big Sandy Valley. He bought largely, and through all the changes which have occurred through purchase and sale he has retained his holdings. Mr. Buhl has made numerous trips up the Big Sandy in company with Mr. Mayo.

The Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railroad Company, of Kentucky filed articles of incorporation with the State Railroad Commission and Sec-

retary of State Thursday, and was authorized to engage in business in the State.

The company will build the connecting link between the Chesapeake and Ohio and the Seaboard Air Line Road at Spartansburg, N. C., and give the first named road a direct connection from Kentucky to the South. The line to be built in Kentucky is only six miles long. It starts at the terminus of the Big Sandy Division of the C. and O. at Elkhorn City, Pike county, and runs through that county to the Virginia line where it connects with a line of road running to that point from Spartansburg, N. C., and belonging to the C. and O. Company.

## LOST FATHER

### Found Here by West Virginians After a Separation of 44 Years.

The following story will be quite a revelation to most of those in this section who have known the principal figure in the story for the past forty or forty-five years. John Wallace is known personally or by reputation to nearly everybody in this part of Lawrence county, but if any of his friends or relatives knew that he was married or had a living wife before he came to this State they kept such knowledge to themselves. His Kentucky wife was a Miss Brannan, a sister of Thomas Brannan, of Louisa, and by her he has children and grandchildren. His home is near the head of Donithan creek, on the ridge which divides the waters of Tug from those of Levisa.

He is a quiet, hardworking man, a citizen who has always borne an excellent reputation. Mr. Wallace is the father of Mrs. Bascom Hale, of this city. The following is from the Ashland Independent:

W. H. Houchins, a prominent resident of Hinton, W. Va., was in Ashland over night while en route to his home from Louisa, where he met his father-in-law, John Wallace, who was supposed to have been dead for the past 41 years.

Mrs. Houchins had received an intimation that her father was still living, and her husband, while on a business trip up Big Sandy, followed up the clue. He found Mr. Wallace who is 70 years old, alive, well and hearty and possessed of a large landed estate.

Mr. Wallace left West Virginia in 1865 after forming a mutual agreement with his wife to separate. They lived on Cales' mountain, near Hinton, at the time. The story is that Mrs. Wallace was wedded to her own people to a degree that displeased her husband, and they decided to live apart. Mr. Wallace is said to have given his wife all his property, and the custody of their only child, Elizabeth, the present Mrs. Houchins. Three months later another child, W. E. Wallace, was born, now living at Clayton, Summers county.

Mr. Wallace left the Cales' mountain home in 1865, kissing his wife and 2-year-old baby good-bye and departing for parts unknown. Some time after he left it was reported that he had been killed in a coal mine in Ohio, and his friends and relatives accepted the report as correct.

Some time ago Mrs. Houchins received intelligence that her father was still living and a resident of Louisa. Mr. Houchins, when he was there this week looked the matter up and found the report true. Mr. Wallace, Mr. Houchins says, owns 550 acres of land in the vicinity of Louisa, and is a large cattle dealer.

His wife is still living, and resides on her son's farm near Clayton. She does not know yet that her husband is still living. Mr. Wallace, told Mr. Houchins that he recognized his children in West Virginia as legal heirs, and expects to treat them as such in the division of his estate.

Mrs. Houchins is overjoyed to know that her father is yet alive, and expects to visit him soon.

On account of the serious illness of his wife Conductor Billie Myers has been off duty for several days. Charley Richardson has Myers' run-

## SHOT TO DEATH.

### Robt. Stepp Killed by Chas. Smith in Martin County Last Friday.

Near the margin of the Coldwater fork of Rockcastle creek, Martin county, in the deep stillness of a country night, and with no witnesses save the stars, two stalwart men fought a pistol duel to the death of one. The survivor is in jail at present, the county seat of Martin, awaiting his trial on a charge of murder. Robt. Stepp, of the same county, sleeps in the narrow house appointed to all the living. A widow and five children survive the husband and father.

Charles Smith, the man who says that he fired in self defense the bullet which maimed him a homicide, rendered himself to the authorities and will trust his case to the verdict of twelve of his peers.

As usual there are two—often more—sides to every story. It is so in this case. The dead man would, if he could speak, tell his version of the deadly encounter. Smith is, so far as the News can learn, the only living witness, and his statement will be weighty when told in court. He had been staying in Inez of late, and he says that last Friday night, the night of the tragedy, he left Inez to go to the home of John Workman, who lives on the Clearwater fork, near the mouth of Blacklog, something like two miles above Inez, and where some of Smith's children were staying. On the opposite side of Rockcastle was a grocery store kept by a man by the name of Preese. Stepp lived about half a mile from this locality. But it is known that he was in the store late Friday evening. Stepp had a sort of chum named Mat Luster, and these two had been together late Friday afternoon. After Smith had been in Workman's house for some time he went out toward the creek bank. He had not gone far until he heard a man say "Is that you, Mat?" "No," responded Smith, "I'm not Mat Luster, I'm Charley Smith."

"Well, you're the — of a — I'm after," and the man who asked the question, Bob Stepp, ran rapidly toward Smith. When he got close enough to see his adversary Stepp began to fire at him, still advancing rapidly. When close enough he grabbed Smith by the coat. Smith jerked away from him, tearing the buttons from his coat in the act. It was then, so he says, and not till then, that Smith fired. He shot twice the first shot piercing Stepp's heart, the second taking effect in his back.

Smith immediately went down to Inez, awakened County Judge James Kirk and surrendered himself into custody. A party went to the scene of the killing and found Stepp lying dead on the ground. In his hand was a revolver containing one loaded cartridge and four empty shells.

There is no evidence that whiskey had any special place in this latest killing. But there is much to show that the devil of jealousy played no small part in the tragedy. Smith had been twice married and twice divorced, both women still living. It is openly charged that Stepp's attentions to one of these caused the bad feeling which on that unlucky Friday night culminated in his death. Stepp was a nephew of former County Judge Stepp, deceased, and had relatives all over Martin county.

Smith was well known in this city during part of the past fall and winter he had charge of the Singer Sewing Machine Company's business in this section and had an office on the corner next to the gas office. He was a son of "Dutch" Frank Smith, an old slave and the worker known to all our older citizens. The homicide will probably be tried during the term of the Martin Circuit Court which begins next Monday.

And He Failed Miserably.

One of our good women has a husband who is apt to crook his elbow with a glass in his hand when opportunity offers and she has a prescribed form of speech which compels him to say over what she has grounds for suspicion. If he repeats it without a balk, well and good, but if otherwise, not so well

and not so good. He went home from "lodge" recently, and as he fumbled a good while with the door knob her suspicions were aroused and she exclaimed, "Say it, Bill!" Bill tried this:

"If a Hottentot taught a Hottentot to tot are the tot could totter, ought the Hottentot tot be taught to say 'naught' or 'naught' on what ought to be taught her? Or if to hoot and toot a Hottentot tot be taught by a Hottentot tooter, should the tooter get hot if the Hottentot tot hoot and toot at the Hottentot tooter?"

## FIVE GREEKS

### Shot Near Catlettsburg by a Boyd County Man.

Five Greek laborers on the Columbia Gas and Electric Company's pipe line were shot by John Johnson, also an employe, on Thursday last near a camp on Chadwick's creek, about three miles from Catlettsburg.

A dispute arose over some coals, and the foreigners set upon Johnson beating him with shovels, picks and other implements. Johnson escaped and ran to a dwelling near by, the Greeks in hot pursuit. Here he secured a repeating shotgun and opened fire upon the crowd, felling four of them and driving all the others, 60 or more, from the works. The foreigners went to their camp, where the wounded ones were later removed.

Natives fearing the Greeks would return to attack Johnson, armed themselves with guns, hastily constructed dynamite bombs and other deadly weapons and acted as bodyguard for him during the afternoon. Deputy Sheriffs were summoned to watch the Greeks at the camp as an outbreak was expected. Johnson has not been arrested.

One of the Greeks is perhaps mortally wounded, while another will lose an eye. The other two are dangerously wounded, the only thing that saved them being the fact that the gun happened to be loaded with clothing larger than No. 7 birdshot.

## Death of Lewis Fannin.

The News regrets to announce the death of Lewis Fannin, one of the best known and highly respected citizens of Lawrence county. It occurred at his home on East Fork, last Saturday morning, and was as sudden as it was unexpected. Early in the day Mr. Fannin declared his intention to do certain work, but his son remonstrated with his father, telling him he would attend to the work himself, and persuaded the old gentleman to go fishing. Accompanied by a grandson Mr. Fannin went to the creek, the two sealing themselves close together. In a few minutes the old man's hat fell off and the boy waded into the creek and got it. He noticed that this grandfather did not pay any attention to him or the hat, and immediately saw that something was the matter. He gave the alarm and his father and a laborer picked up the stricken man and started with him to a schoolhouse close by, but Mr. Fannin died before they had gone more than a few yards.

Mr. Fannin was 74 years old, remarkably well preserved. He was tall and muscular and straight as an arrow. He was a man of excellent habits and of strict integrity, popular and a most excellent citizen. He was foreman of the grand jury at the last August term of court. His death was most probably due to heart disease.

## Mechanical Band.

G. A. Nash has installed a big mechanical band at the skating rink and fine music will enliven his patrons while they enjoy the delights of skatorial exercise. The band plays delightfully and is run by a small hot air engine. Go and hear it.

The examination of the Prewitts, father and son, for the murder of Frank Blevins, was held in Catlettsburg last week. The boy was first tried and the father waived examination. The young man gave bail in the sum of \$3,000 and the father, in \$1,500 for their appearance at the next term of the Boyd Circuit Court.

## NO TYPHOID.

### Louisa Has No Cases and Her People Are Enjoying Good Health.

During the past few days there has been some talk in this community regarding the drinking water used in Louisa. This talk was caused by a report current here that in a filtration of the water from the reservoir showed that it contained myriads of microbes and bacilli, of various sorts, including the typhoid, or the germ which, when taken into the human system produces typhoid fever.

As this report is calculated to cause undue alarm among those who do not entirely understand the matter, the News deems it proper to say a word or two on the subject, and to speak a little more fully than has been spoken on a very important matter; the drinking water of this locality. This paper does not question the correctness of the analysis made of the water from a city hydrant. Ever since the water has been offered to our people as a water fit for use as a beverage the News has lifted its voice in warning, in warning not of the water furnished by the water company in particular but of all water used for drinking purposes. It has published articles, original and selected, on typhoid fever and its causes, naming as a fruitful source of infection water used for drinking. It has repeatedly urged the vital importance of looking to, not only the supply itself, but the source of the supply.

It has told how water, apparently safe from all probable contamination could become polluted, and it has pointed out the remedy. It has told the people that boiling all drinking water destroyed its liability to infect the drinker. The typhoid germ could not possibly survive the 212 degrees of heat necessary to cause water to boil, and if one persisted in drinking any water without taking this simple precaution—one evidently puts but little value upon his life, or, certainly puts but little faith in the teachings, not of science only, but of plain everyday common sense.

So far as absolutely chemically pure water is concerned there is really not very much of it. The ideal pure water is tasteless, odorless, colorless. Where do you find it? Yet, there are many waters which have taste, color and smell and are also entirely fit to drink. Take the water on Sullivan's grocery corner, for instance. It contains mineral of some sort, probably iron in combination with an acid, and possibly some sulphur, but so far as wholesomeness is concerned you may drink it with perfect impunity and in quantities sufficiently large to cause a great sense of fullness.

There is not the slightest ground for any one to be alarmed over a condition, known by all, or most of us, since the day the water coursed its way through our streets. There is no law human, moral or divine which compels any one to drink the water furnished by the water company. For years and years the wells of Louisa have been noted for the coldness and palatability of their waters and their freedom from contamination and infection. These wells are numerous and deep, and few if any of them are sufficiently close to vaults or closets to become unfit for use as a supply of drinking water, and the family must be very awkwardly situated indeed if it cannot get from some of these sources of supply, procure an abundant and sufficient amount of water fit for drinking. The number who drink the reservoir water must not be measured by the number who have the water in their yards and dwellings. Comparatively few drink it, and most of these not because they can get no other.

What the News has so often and so emphatically and truthfully said of the desirability and healthfulness of Louisa as a place of residence it says again, and it has said, hard unvarnished facts to substantiate its claims. One of these facts is that typhoid fever has never prevailed in Louisa as an epidemic. There have been cases which originated here, there is no doubt of that, but people have been brought to

Louisa sick with typhoid, and from these others have been infected. And, as this paper has said, typhoid fever has sources other than water swarming with germs.

Wells throughout country districts often become contaminated and cause typhoid. Therefore, we repeat that precautions are necessary everywhere but not more so in Louisa than elsewhere. We are not forced to drink raw hydrant water any more than the farmer who has a good well near by is compelled to drink bad creek water.

Revering for a moment to the healthfulness of Louisa, let us turn to the pupils of the loved Kentucky Normal College as an object lesson. This is the third year, is it not, that they have thronged our streets and have been welcome dwellers with us. Has death visited any of these while here, or have any died of disease contracted here? How many have been sick here, beyond a few cases of measles or a bad cold? And these pupils and the water works have been here at one and the same time.

The News says again: Observe the laws of health. Live temperately. Eat moderately. Boil your drinking water, and you may laugh at the scyllus and mock at millions of germs.

## FIDDLER'S CONTEST.

### Blind Man, J. E. Haley, Won the Prize Over Seven Contestants.

The Court House was crowded last

Saturday night, the occasion being the contest by old-time fiddlers for a prize of ten dollars in gold. There were eight contestants, each a past-master in the art of eliciting melody from the intestines of a cat by tickling them with hairs from a horse's tail. The musicians were: Kenna Chaffin, J. E. Haley, blind, Mest Spaulding of Tug, blind and with right hand off, Harry Burchett, M. Thompson, of Rich creek, John Copley, of Tug, F. F. Freese and John Daniels. The judges were R. C. McClure, Judge R. F. Vinson and Mr. Carmack. Each contestant played four tunes, all of the olden time, and the room echoed again and again with the shouts and plaudits of the audience. Sourwood Mountain, Turkey in the Straw, Arkansas Traveler, The Mocking Bird, and many other ancient favorites sent the blood in quickened pulses through the veins of the listeners and caused many a foot, big and little, to tap the floor responsive to the rhythm of the tune. After each had played his selection it was evident that the fight had narrowed to three players—Copley, Burchett and Haley. Each of these was required to play the Arkansas Traveler, and the judges awarded the golden prize to Mr. Haley, and the crowd seemed to acquiesce in the verdict.

It was a novel and interesting event. The net proceeds, \$60.10, will be used in the purchase of desks for the teachers in the college.

## A Four Flusher.

Believers in the ground hog faith doubtless have had a great shock to the performance of the weather during the six weeks following February 2 and ending last Thursday. The six weeks of wintry weather forecast by that animal have not materialized, except in spots. On the contrary there have been days when it was hot enough to make the winter coat of the ground hog uncomfortably warm. Despite the oft repeated failure of the animal to make good, the public watches with absorbing interest to see if the old four flushing old beast will run his shadow.

## Killed in a Mine.

On Friday last Irvine Specker, a son of T. J. Spencer, of Meek, was killed in the Muddy Branch mine, near Paintsville, by falling rock. He was so badly crushed that he lived only a few minutes after he was struck. Mr. Spencer was a brother of R. B. Spencer, of this county, candidate for County Court Clerk.

Friends of Alex Lackey will be sorry to hear that he was hurt in a street car accident in Los Angeles, Cal., a short time ago. No bones were broken, but he sustained injuries of the back for which the railroad is endeavoring to settle.